

FORDWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 28th June 2023.

Present: Councillors Adrian McCarthy (chair), Roger Green, Barnaby Riggs, Richard Miller, Rosali Pretorius. In attendance: Guy Foster (clerk), Alan Marsh (KCC) and one members of the public.

The meeting was preceded by a presentation by members of Chislet PC who were keen to resurrect a Joint Parishes Group. The objective is more effectively to put pressure on KCC and CCC on issues of local concern. The meeting was sympathetic to this idea and was happy to be involved in its development.

81/23 Apologies

Harry McKenzie and Keji Moses (CCC) had sent apologies.

82/23 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on May 24th were unanimously approved as tabled and signed by the chairman.

83/23 Matters arising

Cllr McCarthy noted that despite undertakings received from the CDAA, no work had been done on the Drove. It was agreed to write to the CDAA and the landowner again.

84/23 Declarations of interests

Cllr Green declared his role with Friends of Fordwich and District and also declared his position as a trustee of Fordwich United Charities.

85/23 To receive reports from representatives of KCC and CCC

Alan Marsh set out the financial pressures facing KCC, including the increased cost of adult social care, potholes, school building maintenance, sink holes, migrant children, etc. Cllr McCarthy asked about FTC's request for speed limit changes but Mr Marsh felt such changes would also suffer as a result of lack of funds. KCC members' grants have now been reduced to £360 a month.

The meeting was adjourned for comments and questions from members of the public.

It was suggested that we should have more “fun” activities in Fordwich which might include changing the format of the civic service day and possibly a “Fordwich Festival”. This was received favourably by the meeting and it was agreed to discuss it further.

86/23 Planning

The grant of the following applications was noted:

CA/23/00724 (Timbers); CA/23/00524 (Westfield Cottages); CA/23/00649 (37 Fordwich Rd).

87/23 To consider the neighbourhood plan

Cllr Miller reported that work continued on the drafting of various policies. The CCC consultant is due to visit on June 30th.

88/23 To consider the FTC view on Old Park and Chequers Wood

There remains a concern that by the Old Park and Chequers Wood protection group restricting their objectives to a small area, this could conflict with FTC’s objectives which seek to protect a wider area. Cllr McCarthy will write to them and ask them to confirm their planned visit to the next FTC meeting..

89/23 To consider the topic of the Joint Parishes Group

The meeting was happy with the direction as set out by the members of Chislet PC and happy to share information with them and other neighbouring parishes.

90/23 To consider the purchase of a Freeman’s medallion

It was unanimously resolved to accept the quote of £550 from Andrew Bird Jewellery for a new medallion.

91/23 To receive the Chairman and Councillors’ reports

Cllr Green reported that the problem of speeding early morning traffic in Marlowe Meadows continues. Cllr McCarthy will once again write to Canenco.

Cllr Riggs reported that he had attended the recent function at Brightlingsea.

Cllr Pretorius thought that FTC members should try and attend CCC meetings which dealt with the Local Plan. The clerk will write to our CCC members to ask for their help in identifying such meetings in advance.

She also thought the web-site needed a search function. The clerk will ask our new providers if this can be added. It was suggested that the Fordwich domain name might be owned by Catherine Molin. The clerk will look into this.

Cllr Miller suggested that members might like to have a look at the Kent Transport Plan, although the current draft was lacking in detail.

Cllr McCarthy recommended the “Dynamic Councillors” course to members. He thanked the organisers of the art exhibition and the open gardens day. He noted the D-Day celebrations planned for 2024 and suggested we give this some thought.

The owner of the majority of the empty piece of land in the High St is happy for FTC to maintain it and members were happy to volunteer in this respect. It was noted that we have had no response from the owner of the smaller part of this land who had indicated he would be happy to gift it to FTC.

Cllr McCarthy will write to the designated officer at KCC about our speed limit requests. He also thought it might be worth asking KCC about the idea of ANPR cameras to restrict traffic through Fordwich to “access only”..

92/23 Finance

The clerk reported that the cash book balance at 1st June was £17,320.48. This has been reconciled to the bank balance of £18,283.53. The figures are boosted by the receipt of the 2023/24 precept of £10,260.

The following Items for payment were unanimously approved:

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|---------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Guy Foster – June pay and expenses | £417.16 |
| 2. Loxley Group – printing | £25.00 |
| 3. HMRC – PAYE April – June | £278.00 |

Web-site: our support arrangements are moving to an organisation called Smart Design UK. Accordingly it was unanimously resolved to cancel the existing standing order and set up a new one in favour of Smart Design. There are no net cost changes.

93/23 To receive the clerk’s report and correspondence.

- The clerk has received an audit form from KCC in respect of the coronation grant.
- The clerk has written to the leader of CCC asking for advice as to FTC’s involvement in the Local Plan process.

- There is no further word from the CDAA in respect of the Drove.
- There is no further word from CCC in respect of Romany Green Acres.
- There is apparently no confirmation of the availability of grant funding for neighbourhood plans in 2023/24. Cllr Miller confirmed this and the fact that the absence of such funding would be a serious problem.

94/23 Highways and footpaths

No further discussion. It should be noted that Moat Lane will be closed from July 4th for 10 days.

95/23 Date of next meeting

This was confirmed as **Wednesday July 26th at 7.00 pm. The earlier start time should be noted.**

Guy Foster

Clerk to Fordwich Town Council

July 3rd 2023.

Signed as a true record _____ Date: _____

Position _____